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ACTION EAP-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	ACDE-00	AF-01	CIAE-00	OASY-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	EUR-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-16	JUSE-00
	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01
	PA-01	PM-00	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DRL-09	G-01	/055W
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P 220735Z JUN 94
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4858
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA/J5//
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY
AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL PERTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 03438

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, MOPS, UN, RW, AS
SUBJECT: RWANDA PEACEKEEPING - AUSTRALIA CONSIDERING
TROOP CONTRIBUTION
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REF: CANBERRA 2866 (NOTAL)

AUSSIES ACTIVELY CONSIDERING TROOPS FOR RWANDA

1. (C) IN CONTRAST WITH A NEGATIVE STANCE IN LATE MAY
(REFTEL), SENIOR LEVELS OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ARE
ACTIVELY CONSIDERING A PLAN TO SEND ABOUT 300 TROOPS TO
UN PEACEKEEPING IN RWANDA, ACCORDING TO A DEPARTMENT OF

DEFENSE SOURCE. THE OPTION BEING CONSIDERED INCLUDES A MEDICAL COMPANY (120); AN INFANTRY COMPANY (120); PLUS 60 MISCELLANEOUS SPECIALISTS (E.G., ENGINEERS, COMMUNICATORS). WE NOTE THAT RECENT PRESS ACCOUNTS HAVE STRESSED THAT AUSSIE SOLDIERS WOULD NOT SERVE IN WAR ZONES; INSTEAD, THEY WOULD TAKE PART IN A MORE MODEST EFFORT TO ESTABLISH SAFE HAVENS FOR REFUGEES.

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2. (LOU) AN ACTUAL COMMITMENT WOULD REQUIRE TWO STEPS: (A) PRIME MINISTER PAUL KEATING'S APPROVAL OF A JOINT RECOMMENDATION FROM MINISTER FOR DEFENSE ROBERT RAY AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS GARETH EVANS; AND (B) APPROVAL BY CABINET (WHICH WE UNDERSTAND NEXT MEETS ON JUNE 27 AND JULY 7).

3. (U) AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPATION IN RWANDA PEACEKEEPING WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT GIVEN SHADOW FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREW PEACOCK'S RECENT CALL FOR THE GOA TO PROVIDE TROOPS AS REQUESTED BY THE UN.

EVANS CALLS FRENCH PROPOSAL "A COMPLICATING FACTOR"

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4. (U) DURING A SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING ON JUNE 21, FM EVANS CALLED THE FRENCH PROPOSAL TO INTERVENE "A COMPLICATING FACTOR," ADDING THAT IMPOSING PEACE UPON THE PARTIES COULD REQUIRE "UP TO SCORES OF THOUSANDS" OF TROOPS. DECLARING THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND THE EMOTION BEHIND FRENCH PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S ACCUSATION THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WAS GUILTY OF "CULPABLE INACTION," EVANS NEVERTHELESS COMMENTED, "YOU CAN'T BLAME THE UN IF MEMBER COUNTRIES ARE UNWILLING TO MOBILIZE MASSIVE RESOURCES FOR INTERVENTIONIST ENFORCEMENT KINDS OF OPERATIONS. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT THESE ARE EXTREMELY POLITICALLY SENSITIVE MATTERS IN MANY COUNTRIES. GOVERNMENTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SENDING THEIR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN OFF TO FIGHT AND POSSIBLY DIE IN EXOTIC LOCATIONS." EVANS AGREED THAT RWANDA IS A "PECULIARLY HORRENDOUS" EXAMPLE OF INTERNAL CONFLICT BUT SAID THERE ARE MANY SUCH CONFLICTS AROUND THE WORLD. PRESS ACCOUNTS INTERPRETED THESE REMARKS AS INDICATING AUSTRALIAN TROOPS, IF SENT, WOULD NOT JOIN THE FRENCH IN A PEACE-ENFORCEMENT OPERATION. PERKINS

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